

# ACCESS AMERICA

## Spirit of the First Earth Day

*Earth Day 2007 will be an appropriate legacy of that April day 37 years ago.*



*Earth Day, April 22, 1970.*

In the waning months of the 1960s, environmental problems

were proliferating. Rampant air pollution was linked to disease and death in New York, Los Angeles, and elsewhere. There was widespread concern over large-scale use of pesticides, often near densely populated communities. In addition, huge fish kills were reported on the Great Lakes, and the media carried the news that Lake Erie, one of America's largest bodies of fresh water, was in its death throes. Ohio had another jolt when Cleveland's Cuyahoga River, an artery inundated with oil and toxic chemicals, burst into flames by spontaneous combustion.

In response, an estimated 20 million Americans gathered together on April 22, 1970, to participate in a spectacularly well-publicized environmental

demonstration known as "Earth Day." But the months leading up to Earth Day had been frantic.

Media coverage of the massive youth rallies of 1969 - as well as the ghetto riots of 1965 to 1968 - helped to impress on the American public that the United States had become an urban country with complex problems. Committed activists understood that urban environments would be the battlefield for years to come, but they wanted the American public and American political leaders to understand

*Continued on p. 2*

### In this issue

**Spirit of the First Earth Day.....1**

**From the Ambassador...1**

**IRC Tips..... 2**

**Film Series at the American Corner..... 2**

**Alumni Spotlight..... 3**

**Fulbright Programs..... 4**

### From the Ambassador

This small, green and blue planet we call Earth is home to us all. We share the air, water, soil and resources of this planet. It is everyone's responsibility to conserve and preserve these resources for future generations. On April 22, Earth Day, people around the world pause to consider the status of our stewardship of our planet.

During the past 31 years, Americans have made progress on protecting our environment. Tunisia has also made great strides in conserving the pure water and clean air of this beautiful country. As President Bush has stated, "Each of us understands that our prosperity as a Nation will mean little if our legacy to future generations is a world of polluted air, toxic waste, and vanished forests."

There is much work to do. As we celebrate Earth Day on this April 22, 2007, I encourage everyone to join me in renewing our commitment to protecting the environment and leaving our children and grandchildren with a legacy of clean water, clean air, and natural beauty.

—Robert F. Godec

## IRC Tips

In light of this month's topic, here are some selected internet resources from the Information Resource Center:

- AIRNow Air Quality Web Cameras  
<http://www.epa.gov/airnow/webcam.html>
- America's Clean Water Foundation  
<http://www.acwf.org/>
- American Wind Energy Association  
<http://www.awea.org/>
- Center for Clean Air Policy  
<http://www.ccap.org/>
- Earth Day Network  
<http://www.earthday.net/>
- Earth Day.gov  
<http://www.earthday.gov/>
- Environmental History Timeline  
<http://www.radford.edu/~wkovarik/envhist/>
- Freshwater Society  
<http://www.freshwater.org>
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change  
<http://www.ipcc.ch/>
- International Rivers Network  
<http://www.irn.org/>
- Pew Center on Global Climate Change  
<http://www.pewclimate.org/>
- U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change  
<http://unfccc.int/2860.php>
- U.N. World Environment Day 2005  
<http://www.wed2005.org/>

## *Spirit of the first Earth Day* *Continued from p. 1*

that as well.

One prominent politician, Gaylord Nelson, Senator from Wisconsin, had been frustrated throughout the 1960s by the fact that only a "handful" of his Congressional colleagues had any interest in environmental issues. On the other hand, during his travels across the United States, he had been greatly impressed by the dedication and the expertise of the many student and citizen volunteers who were trying to solve pollution problems in their communities. While en route to an environmental speech in Berkeley, California, the Senator was leafing through a copy of Ramparts magazine, when an article about anti-war teach-ins caught his eye. It occurred to him that the teach-in concept might work equally well in raising public awareness of environmental issues.

In September, in a speech given in Seattle, Senator Nelson announced the concept of the teach-in, receiving wide spread media coverage. Weeks later, at his office on Capitol Hill, he

**20 million Americans gathered together on April 22, 1970, for the first ever Earth Day demonstration.**

incorporated a non-profit, non-partisan organization called Environmental Teach-In, Inc., which was to lay the groundwork for a major nationwide series of teach-ins on the environment early in 1970. Senator Nelson selected a 25-year old named Denis Hayes, the dynamic former President of the Stanford student body, as national coordinator. Hayes immediately set to work making plans for the inaugural Earth Day. One masterstroke was the purchase of a full-page ad that appeared in the New York Times. The advertisement announced that on April 22, 1970, at locations throughout the United States, citizens would demonstrate for a cleaner environment.

The signs are promising that Earth Day 2007 will suffer from no dearth of volunteers or money. Its scope will be worldwide, in fact there is every reason to expect that Earth Day 2007 will be an appropriate legacy of that April day 37 years ago when, even if only for 24 hours, people really did seem to matter more than profit and more than technology.

*Adapted from an article by Jack Lewis, EPA Journal, January/February 1990*

## Film Series at the American Corner



Friday, April 20, 2007 at 2:30 PM at the American Corner, we are pleased to present Davis Guggenheim's "An Inconvenient Truth," 2006 Academy Award winner for best documentary. This film follows former Vice President Al Gore as he travels the world with the message that humankind must confront global warming now or face devastating consequences.

*American Corner at AMIDEAST  
22, rue Al Amine Al Abassi, Cité des Jardins, 1002  
Tunis-Belvédère*



## Alumni Spotlight

**Name:** Ameur Jeridi

**Program:** International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP)

**Home in Tunisia:** Kairouan

**U.S. exchange location:** Washington D.C., New Orleans, Los Angeles, San Diego, Portland, and New York City

**Fondest memory of the U.S.:** I will always have New Orleans on my mind, especially the stories of Katrina. Amazingly, watching an IMAX documentary at the Mississippi Riverside was also an experience. Being apart of the International Community and World

Finance Banquet in New York was captivating. New York through my eyes is the world's political capital, the American pride, the city through which light and lightening are blown into the world's veins, where it smells of money, power, and fashion. The most exhilarating times experienced during the tour was learning the history and democratic system of Washington, DC, with the White House, Capitol Hill, Lincoln and Jefferson memorials being the most memorable places I visited.

**Most important lesson learned:** As for discoveries, they can be summarized as follows: America is no longer a segregated society. It is the land of free expression par excellence; American society looks out for the general good and is responsive to people's needs during times of unexpected disasters and crises around the world. U.S. politics are faithful to the Constitution; the federal government supports faith-based organizations and initiatives, and their relevant role in society.

**Advice for other potential participants:** I encourage many others to participate in seeing the U.S. from the inside—politically, socially and geographically. It makes a world of difference. This opportunity provided valuable, precise, insightful information that I will use in the future. A potential candidate among other things can gain knowledge on the social drives and mechanisms lying behind a well-structured and organized American volunteer sector coherent with the U.S. Constitution and free spirit. When discussing U.S. world leadership I learned that a “frontier” is still alive. There is freedom and open competition for individuals from all walks of life. Finally, of the more than 30 stays and visits in 24 capitals and cities of 14 countries, the IVLP ranks first in experience, knowledge and insight—before Rio's 1992 Earth Summit and Johannesburg's 2002 World Summit for Sustainable Development.

**My U.S. experience:** I have studied English, linguistics, U.S. history, American civilization and literature and I have applied my acquisitions in class, NGOs, work and politics. This program gave me first-hand experience of all the things that I have learned and studied throughout my career. The outcome is concretely relevant, valuable knowledge that cuts the imprecise information and preconceived ideas that one may have towards the U.S. The experience has provided me with a lot of new tools for teaching.

**VISIT [ALUMNI.STATE.GOV](http://ALUMNI.STATE.GOV)!**

**The global web-based community by and for  
alumni of U.S. Government exchange programs**

# Fulbright Programs

*The following programs are seeking applicants for 2008-2009.*

## The Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program

This program invites mid-career professionals (at least five years experience) for ten months of study at a U.S. university and a professional internship. Excellent English skills are required (525 or better on the TOEFL examination).

To learn more about this exciting opportunity, please attend one of the following **information sessions at U.S. Embassy Tunis.**

- Friday, April 13 at 3:00 PM  
(RSVP by April 11)
- Tuesday, April 17 at 10:00 AM  
(RSVP by April 13)

An RSVP is required to attend these sessions. Please contact Kaouther Ben Mohamed at [benmohamedk@state.gov](mailto:benmohamedk@state.gov) or 71-107-266 to RSVP.

## The Fulbright Science & Technology Award

This program offers outstanding Tunisian university students the opportunity to study for a Ph.D. in science, technology, or engineering at top U.S. Institutions. Fluency in English (as demonstrated by a TOEFL score of 580 or better) and a GRE score of at least 700 is required.

To learn more about this exciting opportunity, please attend an **information session at U.S. Embassy Tunis:**

- Thursday, April 5 at 3:00 PM

An RSVP is required to attend this session. Please contact Kaouther Ben Mohamed at [benmohamedk@state.gov](mailto:benmohamedk@state.gov) or 71-107-266 to RSVP.

## Fulbright Master's Degree/One-Year Ph. D. Research

This program provides Tunisian university students the opportunity to study for a Masters Degree or conduct research for a Ph.D. at U.S. institutions of higher education. Students must have completed an undergraduate degree (to pursue a Masters Degree) or be currently enrolled in a doctoral program (for the Ph. D. Research Grant), have an excellent academic record and demonstrate fluency in English via a TOEFL score of at least 550 (ITP score accepted).

**Open information sessions** on this program will be held at the following times and places:

- Wednesday, May 2, 2007 at 2:00 PM  
AMIDEAST (Tunis)
- Wednesday, May 16, 2007 at 2:00 PM  
AMIDEAST (Tunis)
- Wednesday, April 11 at 2:00 PM  
WILC Centre International des  
Langues Wanderlust (Sfax)
- Friday, April 27 at 10:00 AM  
AMIDEAST (Sousse)

## Contacts

For information on all Fulbright programs, please contact Ms. Faouzia Ben Khedher at [benkhedherf@state.gov](mailto:benkhedherf@state.gov) or 71-107-438.

For Fulbright Master's Degree/One-Year Ph. D. Research information and application forms, please contact Ms. Leila Zahmoul at [lzahmoul@amideast.org](mailto:lzahmoul@amideast.org) or 71-790-563.

For information on the TOEFL, ITP, GRE or GMAT examinations, please contact Ms. Nabila Lamouchi at [nlamouchi@amideast.org](mailto:nlamouchi@amideast.org) or 71-790-563.



### The American Center

U.S. Embassy Tunis, Les Berges du Lac, 1053 Tunis, Tunisia

Tel. +216 71-107-000, Fax +216 71-963-263

E-mail

Web site: <http://tunis.usembassy.gov>